From the Author with his most humble Duty

Rec'd. 17.

A

LETTER

TO

Richard Lord Bishop of *Landaff*,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

HIS LORDSHIP'S LETTER TO THE LATE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

[Price Eighteen Pence.]

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Richard Lord Biſhop of *Landaff*,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

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By RICHARD CUMBERLAND.

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GR III
BRITISH MUSEUM

A

LETTER, &c.

My Lord,

UPON your conſecration to the ſee of Landaff, your lordſhip has taken a very early opportunity of publiſhing certain propoſals for the benefit, as you conceive, of the eſtabliſhed church; and you have addreſſed them to the head of the church, under the title of *A Letter to His Grace the Archbiſhop of Canterbury, by Richard lord biſhop of Landaff*. A few copies of this pamphlet you had circulated in print ſome months ago, but for reaſons not neceſſary to be explained, a more general publication

of it has been poſtponed from November to March.

The regulations recommended by your lordſhip in this pamphlet are propoſed to be carried into effect by the introduction of a bill or bills into parliament. It is from your lordſhip's authority we are given to underſtand that you did not think fit to ſubmit theſe propoſals, in the firſt inſtance, to the judgement of his Grace of Canterbury and the bench at large; and, if any one ſhould be of opinion, this would have been a meaſure more reſpectful to your right reverend brethren, than the ſtep you have now taken, you ſignify your diſſent from ſuch opinion: You profeſs a *diſpoſition not to be wanting in reſpect to any of your brethren, but you cannot give up a decided opinion out of reſpect to any man or ſet of men; and as to the utility of making the objects of your Letter publicly known, you have not the leaſt doubt or heſitation of mind.* You obſerve, that *if you had previouſly conſulted the bench of biſhops, you might have run the riſque of treating them with apparent diſreſpect; for had they adviſed you to ſuppreſs what you now make public, you would have*

been under the neceſſity of neglecting their advice: You inform us moreover, *that you much diſlike all private caballing in matters of public import*.—The world at large is ſo apt to be edified and entertained by every thing that falls from your lordſhip's pen, that any reaſons which ſatisfy you in the caſe would in all probability content the majority of mankind: but as you have entered into a diſcuſſion of the motives why you did not think fit to communicate this Letter to his Grace of Canterbury or any others of the bench; many of your readers, who would not elſe have concerned themſelves in the queſtion, will now be tempted to take it into conſideration, and as it is not improbable but ſome perſons may be found to maintain opinions oppoſite to your lordſhip's, ſo it is poſſible there may be ſome maintainers of thoſe opinions who (like your lordſhip) may not be diſpoſed *to give them up out of reſpect to thoſe of any other man*, though ever ſo much *decided* in the queſtion.

Some may be ſo tenacious as to maintain, that it would have been more reſpectful in the junior biſhop of the bench to have communicated his ideas to his ſenior brethren, in a

matter of eccleſiaſtical arrangement materially affecting the intereſts of the hierarchy. "If "the new-made biſhop of Landaff is ſo deci- "dedly convinced of the expediency of this "reform, if it is ſo clear," theſe reaſoners may ſay, "to the intellects of this novice "in the prelacy, why might not thoſe of "more experience and equal talents view "it with the ſame degree of perſpicuity?" But this kind of reaſoning will not impoſe upon your ſagacity; you ſuſpected that the judgement of your brethren would not be with you in this propoſal, elſe you would not have excluded them from their ſhare of credit in the meaſure; neither would you have loſt the grace of doing that with their concurrence previouſly obtained, which ultimately cannot be done without it. This would at leaſt have given them an opportunity of acceding with dignity to a ſelf-denying plan, and not *compelling them to come in* by the terrors of the laity and the invectives of the preſs. If they had agreed with you in the great outline of the reform, they might poſſibly have done ſome little unimportant underwork in the modification of it for parliament; in the wording and forma-

tion of a bill perhaps they might, by themſelves or their connexions, have worked under your lordſhip's auſpices to ſome uſe and account; for I hope I ſhall not offend in ſuppoſing, that the compilation of a bill for parliament may have been amongſt the very few branches of ſtudy that did not come under your contemplation *inter ſylvas academi*, as you expreſs it; or in plain Engliſh, at the univerſity of Cambridge. However, of this it is fit I ſpeak doubtingly, as you tell us you had revolved this plan of reform in various ways, whilſt you was there, and had canvaſſed it in converſation with your learned and pious companions in that ſeat of erudition; though you think it might have been deemed great preſumption in you to have preſented your thoughts to his Grace of Canterbury from your ſtation there, before you was elevated to the rank you now hold in the church.

Inſtances of humility in men of merit have a peculiar grace; but how it could have been deemed preſumption in the profeſſor of divinity, to offer his ſentiments to the head of the church, with a modeſt intention to promote the honour and ſervice of the

eſtabliſhed religion, I am at a loſs to divine; and I am ſo unfortunate as to think, in oppoſition to your lordſhip's better judgement, that if the mode you have now taken of publiſhing this Letter as a pamphlet without communicating it to the perſon it is addreſſed to, was in either caſe to be adopted, it would have been more excuſable in a private churchman ſo to have acted towards the archbiſhop, than in a member of his own fraternity. A man may be well capable of projecting ſchemes and ſyſtems of reform *inter ſylvas academi*, but if he is in a private and ſubordinate ſtation, he cannot ſo readily call the elders of the church together, or induce them to ſit in council on his propoſals. Having no official acceſs to the bench or to the ſenate, ſuch a man will of neceſſity addreſs himſelf to the public, and through the channel of the preſs uſher his ideas to the attention of the legiſlature; but that a prelate, who can at all times call upon his brethren for their collected opinions, that a lord of parliament, who in his place can produce and put in motion his own ſuggeſtions for the benefit of church or ſtate, ſhould think it more reſpectful to his

brother

brother biſhops, and more becoming of himſelf, to make public his opinions for reforming the church through the channel of the preſs, rather than through his own organs in that ſenate to which he belongs, is a refinement in propriety to which my comprehenſion does not reach.

If the bench of biſhops had in part or whole rejected your ſuggeſtions, if the legiſlature had wanted the will, or not poſſeſſed the virtue, to adopt and make efficient your propoſals, the preſs was ſtill open, and as your lordſhip's opinion was peremptory and decided for reſorting to publication, though any man or every man was oppoſed to you in opinion, there was no danger but that in the laſt inſtance theſe ineſtimable reſearches, revolved in ſo many various ways, and canvaſſed in the courſe of ſo many learned converſations amongſt the groves of Cambridge, would have ſeen the light. You would then at leaſt have known what your right reverend brethren had to ſay upon the ſubject, and to which branch of the legiſlature to have imputed the obſtruction of your reform; indeed it is ſo hard to find any reaſon for paſſing over your brethren, and reſorting to publication in the

very firſt inſtance, if you could have ſuppoſed they would have joined you in the meaſure, that I muſt believe you took for granted they would not be with you in it. It is at leaſt a fair imputation to the contrary; it is a mode of dealing that moſt certainly implies ſuſpicion, and therefore, until a want of confidence can be made appear to be a mark of reſpect, I cannot think your lordſhip has choſen the happieſt method of expreſſing that courteſy to the bench which you are pleaſed to profeſs, and no doubt intended to obſerve.

There is one kind of ſuſpicion, which your lordſhip's want of confidence in the bench of biſhops, and indeed the tenour of your publication, will naturally inſinuate to the world, and yet I am loth to believe it weighed in your thoughts, which is that of worldly-minded prejudices in favour of the unequal diſtribution of epiſcopal revenues, or, as your lordſhip expreſſes it, *of a mean attention to the emoluments of the preſent mode of church government*. Now, as you have in your own perſon pointedly diſavowed *any mean attention* of this ſort, and expect with juſtice that we ſhould believe you, it would

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be hard indeed to ſuppoſe, with any ſhadow of Chriſtian charity in our boſoms, that you ſhould arrogate to yourſelf alone a ſpiritual purity, for which you do not credit the reſt of your fraternity. But then again it is juſt as hard to account, if you had credited the bench for this ſpiritual purity, why you ſhould not have truſted them with your plan of reform; a plan, which can only be carried into execution by their aid, and the ſanction of the legiſlature: it is as hard to diſcover a motive for your conduct in ſuppreſſing this plan, whilſt you was a private divine, when no ſuch imputation would have attended it's publication, and ſeizing that very moment for doing it, when the inference could not fail of being made in their diſfavour and contempt.

Your lordſhip, amongſt other good plans that you are meditating for the honour and advantage of the church, wiſhes to reduce the biſhoprics to a level in point of income; and though you have long conceived this plan of levelling the richer mitres with the poorer, you will not broach it, whilſt you are a private man, unintereſted in the propoſal: but no ſooner do you ſtep into the

poor ſee of Landaff than out comes a pamphlet, in which you call upon the archbiſhop of Canterbury, as head of the church, to adopt your plan; or rather I ſhould ſay, you call upon the people to ſhame his Grace, and the reſt of the bench, into a compelled accordance to your ideas. A biſhop proclaims to the people, through the organs of the preſs, what it is right for his own order to do, and he holds it for a mark of reſpect to his own order, not to let them into the ſecret beforehand. A lord of parliament harangues the world, without doors, upon a plan of reform, which he himſelf is competent to propoſe to the ſupreme hereditary counſellors of the nation in his own place, within doors. This is very polite to the people, my lord; but I much doubt it's courteſy to your brother peers: to the ſpiritual part of them, at leaſt, it will convey a ſuſpicion, that you doubted either their virtue or their underſtanding. By the ſame rule of conduct any ſenator, in either houſe, having a plan to propoſe for the benefit of church or ſtate, may walk out of the doors of the ſenate to which he belongs, and proclaim it from the huſtings, or publiſh it from a newſ-

paper, and tell us in excuſe, that he thinks this the moſt reſpectful manner of acting towards that ſenate, which he thus deſerts. "I tell you without doors," he might ſay, "what I and all within doors ought to "do." "Have they refuſed to do it?" one might anſwer; "No," he will ſay, "for I was reſolved to communicate it to "you in the firſt inſtance, and then, if they "do it afterwards, the merit will be your's, "for mobbing them into the meaſure." "This is very civil to us, the people," one of their number may reply, "but how does "it look towards your brethren?" "Per-"fectly polite and conſiderate; I mean it "as the greateſt mark of reſpect I can ſhew "them: for if they had not agreed to it, I "was determined to tell you, and it is only "making ſhort work by beginning where "I muſt have finiſhed."

I muſt not omit to obſerve upon one other remark, which your lordſhip has thrown out by way of juſtification for paſſing over the biſhops; viz. *that you much diſlike all private caballing in matters of public import*. This method of excuſing your neglect is of the ſame complexion with the neglect itſelf. If the omiſſion was an inſtance of reſpect, ſo may be

be alſo this reaſon for it. When you was a private man, you held it no diſgrace to take into your council *men of diſintereſted probity, true Chriſtian ſimplicity, and excellent erudition, inter ſylvas academi*; when you became a biſhop, you conſidered a council of biſhops as *a private cabal, which you much diſlike*. Is it becauſe *that diſintereſted probity, Chriſtian ſimplicity, and excellent erudition*, which you found amongſt your fellow-ſtudents at Cambridge, is not to be found amongſt your brother biſhops in London? God forbid! If it be ſo, you do well to reform them; if it be not ſo, you do not well to neglect them. As to *levelling* them, you have effectually done that already by the word *cabal*; and I find you make a very ſenſible diſtinction in favour of your Cambridge friends; in their inſtance, it is a conſultation of good and learned men; in that of the biſhops, it is private cabal, from which you revolt with diſlike.

So much for the motives: it will now be proper to examine the matter of your publication.

Your lordſhip, in the outſet of your pamphlet, takes ſome pains to defend the zeal of the clergy of England, for the church eſtabliſh-

eſtabliſhment, againſt the imputation of an intereſted attention to the *craft, by which they have their livelihood*; and this you do by contending, that they would in general procure as good, or a better proviſion for themſelves and families in other profeſſions, if there was no church eſtabliſhment. This is an aſſertion, my lord, for which the clergy will not thank you, ſuch of their number at leaſt who have a zeal for their religion; for if they could thrive ſo well in the liberal profeſſions without an eſtabliſhed church, it ſhould ſeem as if your lordſhip admitted that the liberal profeſſions, and of courſe the ſtate in general, were not dependant upon that eſtabliſhment for their proſperity; in fewer words, you aſſert that the ſtate could exiſt and flouriſh without the church, a doctrine rather novel for a member of the right reverend bench. You ſay it is a rare thing to ſee a churchman lifting his poſterity above the common level, by the profits of his profeſſion: this allegation experience contradicts by numerous inſtances, and I hope the example of your lordſhip's poſterity will add to the number. You ſay, that an exertion of the ſame talents, which ſerve to

place

place a man on the bench of biſhops, might have placed him on the bench of judges, and the genius of an archbiſhop might have raiſed him to the dignity of a lord high chancellor. This is another allegation, I conceive, for which your brethren, and the religion they profeſs, will have no cauſe to thank you; it is to be hoped that ſome biſhops have been elevated to that order by the purity of their morals and the exemplarineſs of their piety; I have not hitherto underſtood that theſe are requiſites to the promotion of a lawyer: an acuteneſs of talents, and an adroitneſs in defending either ſide of a cauſe, or even making the beſt of a bad one, are recommendations at the bar, but I did not know they were ſo conſidered in the pulpit. The defenders of religion it is preſumed never argue but on the ſtrongeſt ſide; and the talents of a country parſon may be as diſſimilar from thoſe of a country attorney, as his principles may be, without any derogation from his underſtanding or profeſſion.

In times paſt, it is true, the great ſeal has been frequently in the hands of churchmen, but I believe few inſtances occur of men making

making their way to the mitre through the medium of the law. We need not, however, go back to times paſt for inſtances of genius in the profeſſion of the prieſthood; the whole circle of arts and ſciences bears teſtimony to their talents and erudition. Whether we ſpeak of them individually or collectively, it is not poſſible to ſay too much in their praiſe: the ſtate is indebted to them as to ſubjects of the moſt valuable ſort, and they have a claim upon its protection in a peculiar degree: no honeſt man can envy them their revenues, no prudent man would wiſh to ſee them diminiſhed; by their manners they ornament ſociety, by their morals they amend it. When I compare them with the illiterate lazy ſwarm that I have met in countries of another profeſſion of faith, I have felt a national pride of heart in the compariſon: when I ſee their children ſpread through all the liberal profeſſions, when I meet them in our fleets and armies, in our public offices and ſenate, I cannot but conſider every thing that threatens their proſperity, as a danger, in which every good ſubject has an intereſt.

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In your next paragraph you admoniſh his Grace of Canterbury not to let the *mere term innovation* alarm him, or as your lordſhip more *fully* expreſſes it, *alarm his apprehenſion*; that if ſuch was the tendency of your propoſals, you would have thrown them and your pen into the fire.—I beg your lordſhip's pardon for reverſing the order of your expreſſion in this quotation, for though you are pleaſed to declare that you *would have thrown your pen firſt and your propoſals after it*, it would perhaps have been a more natural courſe to have deſtroyed the work firſt and the tool afterwards, as it is not altogether ſo clear how you would have written the propoſals after you had burnt your pen. You remark, *that it is commonly ſaid wiſe and good men look upon every attempt to reform what is amiſs in church or ſtate as a matter of dangerous tendency*; but you expreſs a doubt, whether *there is not as much timidity as wiſdom, as much indolence as goodneſs in this caution*. I think you have not riſqued much in the aſſertion of this doubt, for I am at a loſs to underſtand how any *wiſe* or *good* man can knowingly reject any *wiſe* or

good

good reform. Mere ſpeculative ſchemes of Utopian policy will not impoſe upon the ſagacity of a *wiſe* man, though they glitter in idea; becauſe he will weigh the conſequences, and foreſee the inconveniences which the ſhallow ſhort-ſighted projector did not apprehend: but convince ſuch a man of the *wiſdom* of a propoſal, and if he does not adopt it he is no longer a *wiſe* man. It does not follow that he has as much *timidity* as *wiſdom*; *timidity* may not have been his motive for rejecting the propoſal, and in that caſe he has none of either quality. If it was his motive, ſo far is he from bringing theſe two qualities to a balance, that it i sevident he abounds in one and is devoid of the other. The ſame remark will hold good in the caſe of oppoſers to reforms in the church.

Your lordſhip next proceeds to ſtate to the archbiſhop the propoſals you have in contemplation; but before you do this, you remind his Grace of a maxim of Solomon, " not to meddle with them who are given " to change;" in which maxim your lordſhip agrees with that wiſe king; and you add a pious ejaculation to God, *to forbid*

 that

that either the archbiſhop of Canterbury or yourſelf ſhould be induced *to meddle with them who would wiſh you to change your fear of God into impiety, or your reverence for the king and conſtitution into anarchy or rebellion.* Since the penning of this ejaculation, the worthy metropolitan has been gathered to his anceſtors, and it is univerſally underſtood his Grace was never guilty of the crime you warn him to avoid; the cautionary prayer therefore reſts only with your lordſhip, and to that *let all the people ſay Amen!*

The propoſals are two, viz. one reſpecting the revenues of the biſhops; the other reſpecting thoſe of the inferior clergy, for the better-apportioned diſtribution of what the ſtate allows for the maintenance of the eſtabliſhed clergy.

With reſpect to the biſhoprics, you decline the trouble of entering into the hiſtory of the eſtabliſhment of the ſeveral archbiſhopricks and biſhopricks, though you obſerve *it would be an eaſy matter to diſplay much erudition on the ſubject*; and you content yourſelf with obſerving, that the fact is certain, that the revenues and patronages of the ſees are very unequal in value. On this fact you

ground

ground a propoſal, that a bill ſhould be brought into parliament *to render the biſhopricks more equal to each other, both with reſpect to income and patronage, by annexing part of the eſtates and part of the preferments of the richer biſhopricks to the poorer, as they become vacant:* by which latter proviſo you obſerve that *no injury is propoſed to be done to the preſent poſſeſſors of the richer biſhopricks.*

The advantages reſulting from this plan are; firſt, the releaſing the poorer biſhops from the neceſſity of holding eccleſiaſtical preferments *in commendam* with their biſhopricks; *a practice, which bears hard upon the rights and expectations of the reſt of the clergy; is diſagreeable to the biſhops themſelves, and which expoſes them to much, perhaps, undeſerved obloquy.*

It is undoubtedly to be wiſhed, that the neceſſity of ſupporting the poorer biſhopricks by the aid of preferments *in commendam* did not exiſt; and ſo long as it does exiſt, care ſhould be taken to prevent abuſe and exceſs in the practice; certainly they might be uſed with more moderation than they are in ſome inſtances at preſent. The biſhopricks, whoſe revenues do not ſuffice to maintain

the dignity of their poſſeſſors, may eaſily be enumerated; in ſome of theſe caſes, and perhaps in all, meaſures might be taken for aiding the poſſeſſors, without ſtripping the church at large of any of its parochial benefices or livings; *a cure of ſouls* need in no caſe to be annexed *in commendam* to a biſhoprick, and it is certainly to be wiſhed it was not. Biſhops, whoſe revenues do not reach the annual income of two thouſand pounds, or near upon, might be relieved in various modes without *the cure of ſouls*. When I except *the cure of ſouls* from preferments held *in commendam*, I hope I may without preſumption add, that the *care of education*, and *ſuperintendence of diſcipline*, ought alſo to be excepted; and it has always ſtruck me, that maſterſhips of colleges in our univerſities are not conſiſtently tenable with the duties of a dioceſe. If in any inſtances theſe are held with biſhopricks competent to maintain their incumbents, the practice is condemnable upon the face of it. Neither do I ſee how a profeſſorſhip in either univerſity, is compatible with the paſtoral duties, eſpecially of a diſtant dioceſe: what between parliament and the functions

functions of his profeſſorſhip, ſuch a prelate will find little time to dedicate to a reſidence amongſt his clergy.

If theſe objections ſhould appear to your lordſhip, as if I was yielding to the neceſſity of the reform you have propoſed, I beg to ſay, in arreſt of any ſuch conſtruction, that though I admit the abuſe of preferments held *in commendam*, I do not admit that this abuſe can no otherwiſe be remedied than by levelling the biſhopricks.

The ſtate and condition of every biſhop ought in all reaſon to be ſuch as ſhould rouſe and encourage the inferior clergy to emulate their ſuperiors in thoſe laudable and diſtinguiſhing attainments, to which alone it is to be preſumed they owe their elevation. There never was, in any period of our hiſtory, a bench of biſhops filled by men of more acknowledged merit, than the preſent; there never was a monarch on the throne, who has kept the fountain of eccleſiaſtical honour purer than the reigning ſovereign has done from the period of his acceſſion. If however, any one of the preſent bench accumulates in his perſon eccleſiaſtical preferments *in commendam* with a biſhoprick ſufficient,

as I before obſerved, of itſelf to ſupport his dignity, it is to be wiſhed, (if any ſuch there be) that prelatical monopolizer were reduced, and that one ſhould be diminiſhed rather than the whole order be diſgraced. No man, my lord, can diſpute the advantages of ſending back into circulation amongſt the inferior clergy thoſe preferments which are generally and actually held *in commendam*: I am humbly of opinion moſt of theſe might be diſcharged; but if this cannot be done, and the biſhopricks left upon their preſent footing, ſtill I cannot ſee the neceſſity or the prudence of doing it by your mode of levelling the epiſcopal revenues, for reaſons, which I ſhall hereafter ſubmit. In the meantime, till I am better adviſed, I muſt believe, that if thoſe biſhopricks only were aided, which cannot duly be ſupported without aid, the reſt of the clergy would have no cauſe for complaint, and the biſhops would furniſh no occaſion for obloquy. I hope I ſhall not be miſunderſtood to ſpeak perſonally on this occaſion; the ſtate has thought fit to adopt a civil reform in this time of public exigency, but I could never without deep regret be ſpectator of a reduc-

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tion of the revenues of the clergy, whether dignified or undignified. I am aware that your lordſhip's propoſal does not go generally to this point, but partially and particularly it does; an innovation, which, with ſome popular features to recommend it to the world upon a firſt view, involves ſuch conſequences as threaten ruin to the hierarchy. When I ſay this, let it not be underſtood that I aſcribe any but the beſt intention to your lordſhip: and if in the courſe of theſe remarks I treat your arguments with a freedom that the preſs admits of, and in fact demands, when truth is our purſuit, I hope I ſhall not be accounted wanting in that perſonal reſpect, which I have long and ſincerely entertained for you.

The ſecond argument, which your lordſhip uſes in recommendation of your propoſal, is, that it would be a means of promoting the independence of the biſhops in the houſe of lords, and of preventing the influence, which either actually affects, or is ſuſpected to affect, their minds too powerfully by the proſpect of tranſlation, and *induces them to pay too great an attention to the*

beck of a miniſter. This is a conſideration of your lordſhip's ſtarting, and of which I am follower and not leader: I hope to treat it, notwithſtanding, with all becoming decency, though I ſee no reaſon for ſhrinking from the inveſtigation in any particular. Here is a charge, or (if you pleaſe) a ſuſpicion of ſecularity and corruption of principle in the ſpiritual lords, ſtated in the way of argument by one of the bench, as a motive for levelling their revenues, for the purpoſe amongſt others, of removing out of ſight the tempting lure of a tranſlation, by which any one or more of the biſhops may be induced to follow *the beck of a miniſter.* This obſervation met you in the academic groves of Cambridge, for your own experience of their lordſhips in parliament, at the time of writing this pamphlet, could not well have furniſhed you with foundation either for adopting or rejecting the imputation. It is worthy obſervation, that you ſtate the influence as operating, to no other evil biaſs than that of following *the beck of a miniſter.* It is the crime of ſupporting his Majeſty's government, not that of following any factious leader into oppoſition, that your lordſhip levels at; and

and yet if we are, for the ſake of argument, to ſuppoſe the bench of biſhops ſubject to be corrupted in their parliamentary duty by the expectation of tranſlations, that expectation may in many caſes be derived from the leaders in oppoſition, as well as from the miniſters in immediate office. The tranſitions of power in our government have been ſo frequent, that worldly-minded men are as likely to *oppoſe* out of motives of ſelf-intereſt, as they are to *ſupport*. You have therefore either overlooked this part of the danger, or you think it no danger at all; yet I am unwilling to believe that you think every man who oppoſes a miniſter, gives an unequivocal proof to the world, that he does it with a clear conſcience, and acts for the good of the ſtate.

There is another ſpecies of parliamentary attachment (to give it no harder name) which you either had not in contemplation, or have not taken any meaſures to prevent; and this is, the partiality of gratitude, the political attachment, which ſome are ſuſpected to have to their patrons and benefactors. I can hardly perſuade myſelf that, in your commerce with mankind, you have taken

taken up that unfriendly opinion, which gives them no credit for the principle of gratitude; and yet your ſcheme makes no proviſion againſt the attachments that may be ſuppoſed to ariſe from it. Can a lord ſpiritual act in political concert with a lord temporal, for no other reaſon but the expectation of future promotion on the bench? May he not be ſuſpected of following the meaſures, and ſupporting the politics, of his friend, in gratitude for promotion paſt? And if he follows *the beck of any man*, is he not equally a follower, whether the man who *beckons* to him be a miniſter, or the opponent of a miniſter? Is not the ſtate robbed of his free opinion and advice in both caſes alike?

It muſt occur, from the nature of things, that many ſpiritual lords enter parliament with connexions very apt to give a biaſs to the human mind: ſome of them will be found to be the cadets of noble families; ſome allied by marriage or otherwiſe, to men in power and office; ſome are advanced to the bench by particular patrons; and inſtances will occur, of biſhops who owe their elevation to thoſe who have been their pupils, and

for

for whom they have contracted habits of attachment, little ſhort of parental affection. It is not within the compaſs of human wit to invent a regulation to reſtrain the influence that will be apt to ſpring from theſe connexions. The propoſals ſuggeſted by your lordſhip have nothing of this ſort in view; and I muſt beg you to obſerve, that they are framed to no other purpoſe than that of diſabling the lords ſpiritual from following impulſes of the baſeſt and moſt mercenary ſort; impulſes, ſuppoſed to reſult from the ſordid principle of ſelling their conſciences to a miniſter, in the hope of obtaining promotions in the ſacred function to which they belong. Inſtances of this deſcription may have exiſted, to the diſgrace of the church; but let any ſerious and experienced perſon queſtion himſelf ingenuouſly on the ſubject, and, I am certain, he will acknowledge, that for one example, where he can fix the imputation alluded to by your lordſhip, many will occur to his recollection of the nature I point at, and for which your ſcheme makes no proviſion.

The queſtion therefore, as far as it reſpects the *ſecularity* of the bench, turns upon this

ſingle point—whether it is worth while to reverſe the eſtabliſhed order of the epiſcopal revenues, and reduce the incomes of Wincheſter and Saliſbury, for inſtance, though diſtinguiſhed with the inſignia of the Garter, to the level of Landaff and Bangor, and to equalize the epiſcopal palatine of Durham with Sodor and Man, for the purpoſe of preventing thoſe inferior prelates from an act of baſeneſs, which it is to be preſumed is not, and will not be in their contemplation; and which, after all, if it does, or ever ſhall exiſt in the perſons of ſuch prelates, cannot be remedied by the ſcheme recommended by your lordſhip, or by any other ſcheme within the reach of man's invention. Why ſhould we not conclude, that the language which flows from your lordſhip's pen, paſſes in other men's hearts in the ſame predicament with you? *I ſhould think myſelf utterly unworthy the favour I have received from his Majeſty, and the ſacred office to which I have been appointed, if either fear of offending, or expectation of pleaſing, or any other conſideration on earth, could influence me to diſguiſe my ſentiments on any ſubject of civil or religious importance.* Theſe are your lordſhip's words,

ſpeaking

ſpeaking of yourſelf, theſe are the profeſſions you have publiſhed reſpecting your own independence, whilſt you are propoſing laws to reſtrain the corruption of your brethren of the bench. We are willing to credit you, why ſhould we ſuſpect or impeach other men? Either you think better of yourſelf than you do of your brethren, or you are propoſing regulations upon a reaſon that has no foundation. Here is an avowal of independence in your own perſon, and an inſinuation of corruption in the perſons of your brethren: nay, you muſt ſuffer me to ſay it is more than an inſinuation, it is a charge in direct terms; for you proceed to ſay, that *you do not deny, nay, you are willing to admit in its full extent, that your plan is calculated to reduce the influence of the crown* over the biſhops *in the houſe of lords*. How your brethren may feel this, I do not pretend to gueſs; but as you did not chuſe to publiſh your opinions whilſt you was a private man, from an humble apprehenſion that it would be thought a *great preſumption*, it is evident, at leaſt, that your elevation has not increaſed your humility and fear of offending. It might indeed be prudent not to attack the

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mitre till you had one on your own head; but it ſurely was not a prudence, which aroſe from reſpect to the bench, from candour towards others, or humility with reſpect to yourſelf. Your own character you have diſplayed to the world in colours of the moſt ſelf-flattering caſt; your brethren you have ſhadowed in the darkeſt tints of meanneſs and corruption. If you had communicated your propoſals to the biſhops, or ſubmitted them in your place to the legiſlature, in ſhort, if you had choſen any other method, or any other time and ſtation in your life, than you have now choſen for publiſhing theſe opinions, the invidious part of them might have been avoided; the beneficial (if there is any part that anſwers to the idea) might have been as effectually recommended. Shall we ſuppoſe your lordſhip to have been actuated by worldly views in ſuppreſſing theſe opinions, whilſt you was a candidate for the mitre? that would be to call in queſtion the veracity of your declaration, and to ſuppoſe you capable of being influenced by *the fear of offending*, when you have publicly profeſſed from the preſs, that you have a ſoul ſuperior to ſuch ſordid influence:

fluence: that would be, in fact, conceiving as ill of your lordſhip, as you do of your brethren; which I for one, as a layman and a Chriſtian, ſhould be aſhamed to conceive, much leſs to publiſh to the world.

Glowing as your lordſhip's boſom muſt be with all the conſcious exultation of ſuperior virtue, and with a juſt contempt for that mean character, which you emphatically ſtile the *ſecularity* of the biſhops, I rather wonder that your zeal for purifying and reforming the bench did not publickly ſhew itſelf before you took your ſeat upon it, that ſo you might have entered as the *ſtrong man* does in the parable, and found *your houſe ready ſwept and garniſhed*. Surely it ſtood in as much need of ſweeping before your conſecration, as it does ſince; nay, we might juſtly doubt, if it did not ſtand in more need, as we have your lordſhip's own authority for knowing, that one of the moſt incorrupt and independent men living, fills one of the leaſt eligible biſhopricks in the whole liſt, and conſequently one of the moſt obnoxious to the temptation of a remove. If any biſhop on the bench might be betrayed into a wiſh for a tranſlation, the biſhoprick

ſhoprick of Landaff, in any other hands than your lordſhip's, is the very ſee where ſuch a man would be looked for. If it ſhould ever enter into the head of a miniſter to lure the conſcience of a ſpiritual lord by the hope of a tranſlation, ſuch a miniſter would be as likely to apply his temptations to the poſſeſſor of Landaff *(cæteris paribus)* as to any biſhop on the bench. Nay, I ſhould ſuſpect, even if your bill takes place, and *this little change*, as your lordſhip calls it, *in the church eſtabliſhment* is effected, that the biſhop of Landaff, though made equal in revenue to London, Wincheſter, Saliſbury, or Ely, might ſtill have a preference to one of thoſe ſituations, and not be proof againſt the allurements of a tranſlation. The comforts of a good houſe at Fulham, Chelſea, or London, the ſplendors of a ſtately cathedral, choirs, altars, thrones, even the inſignia of the Garter appending to his perſon, might conſpire to draw off his attachment from his little humble hovel amongſt the mountains of Wales, to the greater indulgences, as well as dignities, of the capital or its vicinity.

Whilſt

Whilſt you, my lord, maintain the poſt of temptation, let the tempter attack you if he dare. Long, very long, therefore, may it remain in your firm poſſeſſion! For if the great ſeducer of mankind, if Satan, who probably takes more joy in the ſeduction of a biſhop than of any common man, and who is alſo more apt to take the form of a miniſter than of any other man, ſhould be *beckoning* to ſome future biſhop of Landaff, and pointing to the dome of Paul's, or ſpire of Saliſbury, I own I tremble for the virtue of your ſucceſſor. I am clear therefore that the beſt thing which can happen will be for your lordſhip to hold inflexibly to your ſtation, unleſs you could level the churches and palaces, as well as the patronages and revenues; unleſs you can frame your bill for *making the rough ways ſmooth, and the crooked paths ſtraight*, and bring the now diſtant mountains of Wales to a proximity with Chelſea and Fulham. But as this may not be poſſible even for a *levelling act* to effect, you have ſtill the reſource *in petto* of bringing Mahomet to the mountain; and, if I was worthy to ſuggeſt an amendment to your bill, it ſhould be for a clauſe to direct

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the building of a decent row of tenements, in the faſhion of bettermoſt alms-houſes, in ſome convenient ſpot, in a cheap country, where the biſhops ſhall be lodged, the ſaid lots and tenements to be exactly equal in dimenſion and convenience:—That theſe ſhall be furniſhed and appointed at the public charge, with the like critical equality, and every occupier to be under a diſability of adding to or improving his particular lot or tenement, ſo as the ſame ſhall be made in any reſpect preferable to or different from thoſe of his neighbours and brethren:—That as ſome dioceſes are more diſtant and of greater extent than others, and as the well-known zeal of the biſhops may lead them to prefer thoſe of great labour to ſuch in which the duty is more light, there ſhall be a regulation of circuits after the manner of the judges, in which the ſenior biſhops ſhall be gratified with the more laborious viſitations to their ſhare, as an example whereby to animate their younger brethren, and tending to the edification of the whole Chriſtian world:—That the viſitation circuit of *Sodor and Man*, as being attended with more fatigue and danger than any other, ſhall be the apoſ-

 tolical

tolical privilege of the archbiſhop of Canterbury :—That all preferments of whatever claſs, in the gift of the church at large, ſhall be beſtowed in rotation, as the ſame ſhall fall in ; and the ſaid preferments ſhall be ſo apportioned amongſt the clergy of the dioceſe wherein they fall, that as far as poſſible every man's income in the church ſhall be brought to a level, without attention to the merit or demerit of the party :—That all temptation to obey *the beck of a miniſter*, from the proſpect of a tranſlation, being thus removed, it will be the duty of the bill to provide againſt every other ſpecies of influence which may operate upon the opinions of the lords ſpiritual in parliament ; but as it will be difficult, or perhaps impoſſible, to eradicate from the minds of the biſhops all gratitude and predilection to benefactors and patrons, all natural leaning and affection to relations in office and power, or to connexions contracted by marriage or otherwiſe, it ſhall by this bill be enacted, as a means to put to ſilence all ſuſpicions of the purity of their parliamentary conſcience, and totally to defeat the inſinuations of the malicious, that in all civil queſtions affect-

ing the ſtate (fully convinced that no miniſter ever had the good of that ſtate at heart) they ſhall vote uniformly and with one conſent againſt the court:—In all queſtions touching the concerns and intereſts of the church, well aſſured they can have but one way of thinking in the caſe, they ſhall be left to vote according to their own free choice and arbitration.

Modified in ſome ſuch manner as above, the bill, I hope, will be ſufficiently reſtrictive upon the biſhops to ſatisfy your ſuſpicions of them, and the laudable abhorrence you expreſs againſt the ſecularity of the bench. I am ſorry that ſuch tight reſtrictions are in your lordſhip's opinion neceſſary to ſecure their independence, and that we are taught by one of their own number to believe there is ſo much leſs conſcience in the church than in the law. Before his preſent Majeſty's acceſſion, the judges held their places on precarious tenure; the privileges of the mitre have been always more ſecure. Biſhops have indeed, upon a ſtretch of prerogative, been committed to the Tower; but the prince who ſent them thither had good cauſe to repent of it. Are the bench

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of biſhops at this moment leſs independent than the bench of judges, either in point of tenure, or in point of revenue? If there are allurements of tranſlation in the ſacred order, are there not alſo ſuch in the legal? The chancellor, and the chiefs, are virtually the archbiſhops of the law. Nay, I ſhould be warranted in aſſerting that the allurements, which the crown (or, if you pleaſe, the miniſter) has to hold out to the judges, are greater than he has to offer to the conſciences of the biſhops; for the peerage, which in the latter inſtance is an annexation to the order, in the former caſe is a temptation to enhance the influence of the court above the intereſts of the ſubject. Yet who will breathe a doubt of the independence, or of the purity of the judges? Why then ſhould we indulge ſuſpicions in diſfavour of the biſhops? Is the education, or are the habits of a parſon more inclinable to corrupt his conſcience than the practice of a lawyer? Muſt the ſacred order be ſhackled by the fetters of an equalizing law, and the legal one be left open to the allurements of ambition, and the ſpur of emulation? Shall the biſhops be levelled, and chained down to the

bench, like a gang of galley-ſlaves, to keep them quiet and *prevent their riſing*; and ſhall the judges be left at liberty to forge the fetters that confine theſe galley-ſlaves, nay to whip them to their duty by the laſhing ſcourges of the law? I ſhould hope there is no call for theſe reſtrictions; I ſhould hope you are ſuſpicious of your brethren without cauſe; and, conſcious as your lordſhip juſtly is of your own integrity, I could wiſh you thought more favourably of the integrity of others. Is it an uncommon ſight to ſee the biſhops divide in civil queſtions of ſtate againſt the wiſhes of the miniſter? Several of the bench, and ſome who poſſeſs no very deſirable ſituations, were ſeen upon late occaſions conſpiring to diſplace the miniſter. If in general they think and vote alike, ſhall it be urged as matter of diſgrace againſt them? On the contrary, is it not much to their reputation to be found united in the ſupport of his Majeſty's government upon general queſtions of civil import, and not ſplitting and dividing into petty factions upon every contentious matter that oppoſition ſtarts, in its determined animoſity againſt miniſtry. I hope my words will not be carried further

than

than they mean. Few men in my ſphere of life have leſs cauſe to confide in miniſters, and none, I hope, have more occaſion to lament the having truſted them, and ſerved them. I hope there will ever be found wiſe men to watch them, good men to oppoſe them, and reſolute men to puniſh them: but I would have no men teaze them or cripple them for miſchief's ſake; and leaſt of all would I have ſuch a ſpirit of obſtruction find a place within a biſhop's boſom. Upon the vacancy of Canterbury, more than one prelate was found, who declined the offer of the primacy of all England; and a biſhop has been raiſed to that high ſtation, who owes his elevation to his merit. Though it would be a very pleaſing taſk to ſpeak of every individual of a bench ſo reſpectably filled as the preſent, I forbear to ſtate further particulars, for reaſons too obvious to need an explanation.

Taking it for granted, that the biſhops are under the influence of the crown, your lordſhip infers, that this bill will tend to leſſen that influence; and you enter upon a ſpeculative diſcuſſion of the many evil conſequences incident to ſuch a ſyſtem of govern-

ment. In doing this, you guard the public from ſuſpecting that you have any wiſh at heart of lowering the legal prerogative, or of ſeeing a preponderation in the people's or nobles ſcale of the conſtitution over that of the monarch. It is againſt that part only of the regal influence your wiſhes point, that extends itſelf to the deliberations of the hereditary counſellors of the crown, or the parliamentary repreſentatives of the people; and you inſtance the late pernicious effects of that influence, by whoſe predominancy for a courſe of years, *the brighteſt jewel of his Majeſty's crown is now become tarniſhed, and the ſtrongeſt limb of the Britiſh empire rudely ſevered from its parent ſtock.* This inſtance, without doubt, refers to the conduct of the late war reſpecting America; which began with the revolt, and terminated in the loſs of the colonies. Your lordſhip imputes all theſe misfortunes to the influence of the crown over the deliberations of its public counſellors; which, if they had been left free and unbiaſſed, would have produced ſuch meaſures, as in the end had prevented thoſe misfortunes you deplore.

Weak or wicked muſt be that ſovereign, and unworthy to be called the father of his people, who aſſigns over his influence to a miniſter for the crooked purpoſe of forcing meaſures upon a parliament againſt the intereſts and the judgement of his ſubjects. This is the implication of your lordſhip's charge, and a very ſerious one it is. Not content to attack with plain proſe, you draw the weapon of the drama on this occaſion, and quote the following lines, viz.

It is the curſe of kings, to be attended
By ſlaves, who take their humours for a warrant,
And who, to be endeared to a king,
Make it no conſcience to deſtroy his honour.

This quotation follows your proteſt againſt the fatal predominancy of the crown's influence in the late inſtance of the American war: your application therefore is too pointed to be miſtaken. If you had painted the miniſter as the tyrant over the king, the king, being a ſlave, had not been reſponſible for the abuſe of his influence; but your quotation

tation ſtates the king to be the tyrant, and the miniſter the ſlave, who takes *his humours for a warrant*. Your's is an unqualified accuſation; I may add, it is alſo an unprovoked one; for it was not by neceſſity that the reduction of the biſhopricks ſhould lead you to the revolt of America: neither would it have been any impeachment to your diſcretion, after the recent bounty of the crown, if you had ſpared your benefactor.

Permit me to add—as your lordſhip has helped us to the example of St. Chryſoſtom for ſleeping with an Ariſtophanes under his pillow, and given us the above quotation from the drama after his example, it may not be impertinent in me to offer another paſſage from the ſtage, though I do not venture to recommend you to put it like a bridal cake under your pillow, as it might chance to ſet you a dreaming. It runs pretty nearly in the ſame words with the paſſage you have ſelected, though not from the ſame author; viz.

"It

" It is the curſe of kings to be inſulted
" By men, who grow preſumptuous on preferment,
" And who, to be endeared to the people,
" Make it no conſcience to arraign their
" maſter."

I ſhall not enter far into this queſtion with your lordſhip, becauſe you have ſtarted it in the moſt unfavourable moment for its agitation. There needed not your lordſhip's authority for imputing the misfortunes of this fatal war to the influence of the ſovereign; the emiſſaries of America have reported this inflammatory doctrine, and echoed it in her ears repeatedly: the incendiaries of England have circulated it; but reaſon, truth, and loyalty reject the hateful aſſertion.

You have ſtirred a queſtion, my lord biſhop, too complicated to be underſtood, except by thoſe who are furniſhed with an intimate knowledge of the proceedings, with great impartiality, and acute diſcernment. The leaſt that can be ſaid, is, that in thus pronouncing on the fact you have *begged the queſtion* in ſome very material points. And

firſt I muſt obſerve, before it can be pronounced that the ſeparation of America was owing to the predominancy of his Majeſty's influence over the two houſes of parliament, it ſhould be proved that the revolt was owing to it: this alone, my lord, would be a diſquiſition that no man could manage without complete official information. It is not *inter ſylvas academi*, this point can be properly ſifted; it is not within the reſearches of erudition, or the ſpeculations of literary theoriſts, to decide upon this poſition: it muſt turn upon hiſtorical evidences; and theſe can be known only by men who have been intimately converſant in the affairs of the colonies from times long paſt. Events of notoriety all men of obſervation will agree upon; but nice attention muſt be paid to the leading cauſes of thoſe events, elſe we ſhould ſpend our words in the air without any fixt object of controverſy. If there was a premeditation of revolt, whether that premeditation was or was not precipitated into overt acts of revolt by the miſconduct of government, ſtill it cannot be pronounced that the colonies would not have been ſevered from the empire, though the influence

of

of the crown had not been unduly exerted to corrupt the judgement of the legiſlature. If there was an original independant motive for attempting the ſeparation, we may diſpute upon the propriety or impropriety of the means purſued for fruſtrating that attempt; but we cannot fairly pronounce that it would not have been carried through but for the inſufficiency and unfitneſs of thoſe means. How does it appear that the war with America was not the war of the people, but of the king and his miniſters? If your lordſhip cannot prove that there was no neceſſity for *coercion*, the point in queſtion will reſt between the deliberative and the executive ſervants of the public; and, though you have thought proper to decide againſt the miniſter only, others may have ſomething to oppoſe in extenuation of your ſentence. In ſhort, a thouſand dubious points preſent themſelves to a diſpaſſionate enquirer, which muſt all be cleared away, and made to ſtand in charge againſt the miniſter, before you can with juſtice place to his account, and to the evil influence of the crown, the revolt and loſs of the American colonies.

It is neceſſary to prove that the colonies never meditated

meditated a revolt from the mother country; that, if they did, human prudence could have dictated means for it's prevention; that the meaſures which were taken, were taken againſt the ſenſe and conviction of the majority of the legiſlature, and over-ruled by the unconſtitutional influence of the crown; and laſtly, that the exertions called forth from the nation by the miniſter, and by him committed to the executive agents, were in fact ſo miſcalculated and inadequate, that they muſt have failed, though managed with the greateſt poſſible addreſs and ability in operation. Men are ſubject to errors in action, as well as errors in judgement: of the former you make no account, to the latter you impute the whole. Demonſtrate, therefore, that no misfortunes are imputable to the executive conductors of the war, or prove that the deliberative conductors were ſo erroneous, that the like misfortunes muſt have enſued from mere neceſſity, and without miſmanagement in point of operation. When this is done, you will bring the charge completely home to the miniſter; and, having eſtabliſhed this poſtulatum to your ſatisfaction, you muſt convince your readers that the ſenſe of

parliament

parliament was againſt the meaſure, and that the crown by its influence overruled and perverted the better judgement of the legiſlature. This is a queſtion that cannot be decided by any one man's decree; hiſtorians it is to be hoped will faithfully record the facts, and poſterity will give judgement when paſſion is extinct.

Your lordſhip has declared yourſelf in the following words, viz. *Not one jot of the legal prerogative did I ever wiſh to ſee aboliſhed.*— All good men, anxious for the maintenance of our civil liberties, will accord to this wiſh. Times have been, when the royal prerogative was a topic held to be too ſacred in its nature to be profaned by the diſcuſſions of a ſubject. Elizabeth told her parliaments to forbear diſcourſing upon matters of ſtate; that they *ought not to deal, to judge, or to meddle with her prerogative royal.* King James, with a pedantic circumlocution ſuitable to his character, laid it down as a propoſition in his ſpeeches, that *as it is atheiſm and blaſphemy in a creature to diſpute what the Deity may do, ſo it is preſumption and ſedition in a ſubject to diſpute what a king may do in the height of his power; good Chriſtians will be*

content

content with God's will, revealed in his word; and good ſubjects will reſt in the king's will, revealed in his law. We now hold a language more ſuitable to our conſtitution, and the limits of regal authority are defined, canvaſſed, and laid down with preciſion. Farther to contract and narrow theſe limits, would be to deſtroy the equipoiſe of our conſtitution and throw it from its hinges. The object which modern patriotiſm views with jealouſy, is the *influence* of the crown; whether regulations lately enforced have circumſcribed this *influence* ſufficiently, or too much, time will diſcover, without my preſuming to obtrude an inſignificant opinion. Honeſt men cannot differ in their ſentiments upon the principle of political corruption; they muſt unite in abhorring the idea. But to conceive that government will be carried on by the looſe opinions and advice of extra-official members of council or parliament, may be a very pretty ſpeculation *inter ſylvas academi*, but will never hold in practice. The hired ſervants of the crown muſt do the buſineſs of the crown: if a miniſter ſhall attempt to govern by the opinions of the public, this country will ſoon be found in a ſtate

a ſtate of anarchy and confuſion: reduced as the king's prerogative now is, his influence in the ſtate ſhould be touched with a very tender hand, otherwiſe it may prove, that whilſt we think we are lopping off only the rotten branches of corruption, we may find to our coſt that we have deſtroyed the root and ſap of the tree: the vigour and energy of execution muſt be left entire, and in which of the three branches that exiſts we need not be reminded. The knife perhaps has pruned too deep already; if this be ſo, the conſequences will be ſoon apparent: and theſe will be, a turbulent interference of the people; intemperate alterations in the conſtitution under ſpecious titles of reform; quick ſucceſſions of adminiſtration; ſeceſſion and revolt from office, and a dread of reſponſibility in men of ſtation and experience; ſudden elevation of new people, whom clamour raiſes into conſequence, and deſperation forces upon undertakings above their talents, their condition, or experience; every revolution of the miniſtry will be an arrant ſcramble for office, and as few can be fed, though all will be hungry, the mouths that are left empty, will be left open, and loudeſt

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in the cry of diſcontent. The tenure of office being rendered vague and fugitive, men will plunder with rapacity what they poſſeſs themſelves of by violence; like tenants warned from a leaſe, they will rack the ſoil for a crop, convinced they ſhall not wait the ſowing of another; or, to borrow an alluſion from your lordſhip's publication now before me, they will treat their places with that kind of neglect, which your plan imputes to biſhops in inferior ſees; and conſider them only as the ſtepping-ſtones of ambition, and baiting-places in the road to preferment.

When this turns out to be the caſe, it will appear that thoſe miſtaken meaſures, which were taken on the plea of preventives againſt corruption, have ultimately been the promoters of it, and that by reducing the influence of the crown, they have impaired the vital ſtrength of the ſtate: when *this* turns out to be the caſe, the ſtaff of office will tremble in each hand that holds it; the ſovereign will find himſelf ſurrounded by a ſucceſſion of faces new to the court, and his body under guard of thoſe, who are even ſtrangers to his perſon. A king without influence will have a miniſter without power,

and

and an impotent miniſter will make an impotent nation. The great earl of Chatham ſaid, *he quitted councils which he could no longer guide*; the language indeed was high, but it was the language of efficiency: a ſhort time will ſhow whether theſe are conſequences to be apprehended, or not. Upon the whole, I ſee no demonſtrative reaſon to accuſe the biſhops of worldly-minded motives, becauſe in general they ſupport the meaſures of the crown; for if oppoſition be, as ſome men believe, the reſult of party, and a ſtruggle for civil employment, the biſhops, who have no civil employment to ſtruggle for, have not thoſe motives for oppoſing as the temporal peers have, and will of courſe in general divide with government, though you could level their revenues with ſuch nicety, as to leave no preference in the choice of preferments, that might influence the conſciences even of the moſt pliant.

Another probable conſequence of the propoſed plan, is ſtated by your lordſhip to be, the *longer* reſidence of the biſhops in their reſpective dioceſes. By *longer* reſidence, it is to be preſumed you mean *longer* in proportion to their poſſeſſion, or in other words,

cloſer and more conſtant reſidence: and you moreover think, *they would be induced to render their places of reſidence more comfortable and commodious.* This opinion merits ſome examination.

In all duties and profeſſions, men require ſome ſpur to quicken their exertions for the attainment of excellence in their particular vocations; in other words, they muſt be rouſed by emulation, and the proſpect of riſing to more diſtinguiſhed honours and advantages than they already enjoy: ſhut this proſpect, and their ardour cools. Every man's experience in life confirms this obſervation; it does not want to be explained, and it cannot be diſputed. Rewards inſpire a zeal for virtuous attainments, as puniſhments deter from the commiſſion of evil deeds. Tell a man he is at the end of his race, that he has nothing further to contend for, and he runs no further, he contends no longer; he ſinks into the languor of content, or ruſts in ſullenneſs and negligence. It appears to me that your lordſhip's propoſal is open to this general objection, that it is calculated to extinguiſh that degree of emulation, which is created by the hope of profit and promotion.

That

That you can ſuppoſe a biſhop ſubject to be acted upon by theſe motives is evident, from your apprehenſion of their being influenced by the crown, the fountain of honours: grant only that the crown is capable of beſtowing honours according to deſert (and your lordſhip cannot well deny what your own example proves) you admit my reaſoning in its utmoſt force of objection. Reduce the biſhops to the level condition of a convent of monks, you render them at once a ſwarm of drones; and whether they ſleep within or without the pale of their own dioceſe will be a matter of ſmall concern. As the caſe now ſtands, if a young aſpiring prelate enters a new dioceſe, he looks around him for occaſions of diſtinguiſhing himſelf; his zeal communicates itſelf to the ſubordinate clergy that fall within his notice; they look up to him as a riſing man, and ſtrive to recommend themſelves by peculiar aſſiduity and good conduct; thus life and ſpirit circulate from his center, and his ambition gives a ſpring to all around it: the contrary to this muſt happen, if your lordſhip's regulations were adopted. Examine how it ſtands in other callings and profeſſions. Tell the clerk in office, he is

at the utmoſt of his earnings, and you will ſoon find him at the end of his exertions; if he drudges through his daily taſk, 'tis as much as you can look for; change the ſcene before him, by holding out the hope of advancement, and he becomes alert. In the military profeſſion 'tis the expectation of *a ſtep*; 'tis *young ambition's ladder* that ſets men to climbing: convince him that he has no more to look to, and, like *Lucullus's ſoldier—poſthæc ille catus*. 'Tis a coarſe and vulgar ſaying, but a good one, that "new brooms "ſweep clean." And if ever I ſhould hear of any attempts to alter and reform the eſtabliſhed church, I would riſque a gueſs that it originates with ſome young aſpiring prelate, hot in zeal and new in office, who, by correcting others, wants to ſignalize himſelf.

As to that part of your lordſhip's expectation, which ſuppoſes that the biſhops under your bill would ſet about improving their places of reſidence and rendering them more comfortable and commodious, I believe the very reverſe would inevitably follow. Many of the wealthy biſhopricks are endowed with ſtately palaces, erected and maintained at great

great expence, and ſeveral with pluralities of manſions, which, upon your propoſed ſcale, could not be kept up, much leſs improved by their poſſeſſors. How would the reduced biſhops of Wincheſter, Durham, London, Worceſter, &c. be able upon their revenues to ſupport ſuch expenſive palaces in any decent condition? and who but would ſhun a biſhoprick ſo encumbered, unleſs he was a man of independent fortune?

Upon a review of this argument, it appears in the firſt place doubtful, if your lordſhip's propoſed bill would induce the biſhops to a cloſer reſidence. In the ſecond place, I hold it certain, that, if it did, they would reſide in their dioceſes with infinitely leſs effect than they do at preſent, for the reaſons above given. And in the laſt place, it is a contradiction in terms to ſuppoſe that a biſhop will maintain and improve his place of reſidence upon a reduced income, better than he will upon an extended one.

As your lordſhip profeſſes a diſinclination from ſpending any further time in delineating a ſcheme, *which either the more comprehenſive wiſdom, or the more efficient prejudices of other men, may quaſh at once*, I ſhall alſo

decline any further remarks, though very many occur in objection to the propoſal. It may not be amiſs however to premiſe, that I ſhall have occaſion to come back again to the conſideration of this *levelling bill*, in the courſe of my remarks upon your lordſhip's ſecond propoſition.

This propoſition your lordſhip ſtates to be for the introduction of a bill into parliament, *for appropriating, as they become vacant, one third, or ſome other definite part of the income of every deanery, prebend, or canonry, of the churches of Weſtminſter, Windſor, Chriſt Church, Canterbury, Worceſter, Durham, Norwich, Ely, Peterborough, Carliſle, &c. to the ſame purpoſes, mutatis mutandis, as the firſt-fruits and tenths were appropriated by the act paſſed in the fifth of Queen Anne.* You obſerve that this muſt be done with the ſpecial conſent of the crown, many of the ſaid preferments being in his Majeſty's gift; by this I preſume is meant the *previous* conſent of the crown, which it will certainly be neceſſary in the firſt inſtance to obtain, and to ſtate in the bill.

Having ſtated the purport of your bill to his Grace of Canterbury, your lordſhip pro-

ceeds to addreſs him in the following words: *This propoſal will, I am ſenſible, be very differently received by different ſorts of men*; SOME *will conſider it as an attack upon the hierarchy, as tending to lower the church eſtabliſhment*; OTHERS *will think that it does not go far enough, they will prefer levelling to lowering, the abolition of deans and chapters to their reduction. So much may reaſonably be ſaid on both ſides, that I cannot on this occaſion ſtop to ſay any thing on either ſide; and my buſineſs indeed is not ſo much with deans and chapters, as with a very uſeful, with what* SOME *will not ſcruple to call the moſt uſeful part of the clergy—the parochial clergy.*

This, my lord, is a very extraordinary paſſage in many particulars, and demands a more minute examination than I would generally wiſh to give to what your lordſhip has thought fit to publiſh.

You tell the archbiſhop of Canterbury that you are ſenſible *ſome* people will conſider your propoſal as an attack upon the hierarchy; *others* will think it ought to be extended to the abolition of deans and chapters: in ſhort, that the whole public (included under the oppoſite diſtinctions of

ſome

ſome and *others)* will divide upon your meaſure; *ſome* thinking that it goes too far; *others*, that it does not go far enough. The expreſſion juſtifies the above conſtruction, nay, it admits none elſe; for there is no mention made of any third claſs or deſcription of men: theſe two, of *ſome* and *others*, comprehend the whole. However, my lord, let this paſs as mere inaccuracy of expreſſion; let us wave the verbal interpretation; it is not upon words I would contend with you, let us meet upon the ſenſe and ſpirit of them, if that can be diſcovered. You ſtate two orders of people in the extremes of opinion touching your propoſal; each of them adverſe to the meaſure of your bill. The members of both houſes of parliament, through whoſe hands your bill is to paſs before it can take effect, are preſumed to come under the firſt deſcription of opponents; for as no ſectaries can hold a ſeat in either houſe, it is to be expected none will there be found who maintain opinions ſo adverſe to the church, which their own authority has *eſtabliſhed*, as to join with your laſt-mentioned claſs, who are for aboliſhing the dignitaries which you propoſe to reduce.

Your right reverend brethren alſo may well be ſuppoſed to hold the firſt opinion; and probably the good metropolitan, now deceaſed, to whom your pamphlet is addreſſed, was of that way of thinking.

Let us conſider how your lordſhip treats theſe opinions, which you have ſtated to the archbiſhop as being adverſe to your propoſal. You tell him that ſo much may reaſonably be ſaid on both ſides, that you cannot on this occaſion ſtop to ſay any thing on either ſide. This is a ſingular mode of treating the perſon you write to, and the ſubject you write upon. You addreſs the archbiſhop of Canterbury by a printed pamphlet, propoſing to him a very important alteration in the church eſtabliſhment; you tell him that *ſome* people object to your propoſal as going too far, *other* people object to it as not going far enough, that there is much reaſon on both ſides, and on that very account you cannot ſtop to ſay any thing to his Grace on either ſide. Had the objections been trifling or contemptible, you might have ſo diſmiſſed them; nay, you might more probably have forborn to ſtate them at all; but this is not the caſe, even

by

by your own confeſſion. 'Tis more than probable, as I before obſerved, that your brethren of the bench are included in one of theſe two claſſes, and yet you cannot or you will not ſtop to anſwer their objections. Is this fair to your ſubject; is it reſpectful to your correſpondent? Is the topick upon which you write, a matter of ſmall conſequence to church or ſtate, that you ſhould run from it in ſuch a hurry? And what ſpecies of hurry is this, which gives you time to object, and leaves you none to defend? What kind of avocations are theſe, which allow you leiſure to ſtart difficulties, and none to tell us how thoſe difficulties may be got rid of? You do not come out by compulſion as a reformer of the church eſtabliſhment, you are a volunteer in the office. If you had taken a little more time and experience of your new dignity; if you had conſulted your brethren, and ripened thoſe ideas, which you conceived *inter ſylvas academi*, by the converſation of men of buſineſs and of practice in the ſtate, with whom your elevation now enables you to communicate, the world would not have reproached you for indolence in office; and if you had

then

then thought fit to have printed your propoſals for the reform of the eſtabliſhment at large, or of that order in particular to which you perſonally belong, thoſe propoſals would not have been the leſs mature in judgement, the leſs reſpectful to the public, or the leſs becoming of yourſelf, if they had appeared after due deliberation and experience, ſeriouſly weighed and fully explained. In few words, my lord, I conceive nobody would have thought you had been too late in time, though you had been leſs in a hurry; nor would any one have found fault with your indolence, though you had delayed publiſhing till you underſtood your ſubject.

In the paſſage above quoted, you are pleaſed to ſay, that your buſineſs is not ſo much with deans and chapters, as with a *very uſeful part* of the clergy, the parochial clergy. If I could ſuppoſe your lordſhip capable of a leaning to thoſe opinions, which are for the abolition of deans and chapters, I ſhould ſuppoſe it from this paſſage; in which you plainly and pointedly diſtinguiſh the deans and chapters from what you call the *uſeful part* of the clergy. I would not force a meaning on you that is not your

own;

own; but what other interpretation will this paſſage bear, but that it is with *the uſeful part* of the clergy, and not with the deans and chapters, you concern yourſelf? And yet I ſhould be humbly of opinion, when you take property from one man and give it to another, you have equal buſineſs with both; it would not be eaſy to convince the loſing party, or any party, of the contrary; the thing ſpeaks for itſelf: and I am apt to think it is rather a conciſe way of dealing with any order of men, to ſuggeſt propoſals for ſtripping them of their incomes, and then diſmiſs them by ſaying, that your buſineſs does not lie with them, but with *the very uſeful people* to whom you beſtow the plunder of their revenues.

Not content with thus diſtinguiſhing the devoted deans and chapters from *the very uſeful* parochial clergy, you go on to ſay, that *ſome* people will not ſcruple to call the ſaid parochial clergy *the moſt uſeful* part of the whole body. Here you find a word to fling at your brethren the biſhops, and, by caſting my eye back a few pages in your pamphlet, *ſome* people ſtare me again in the face, who are for driving the biſhops out of the

the houſe of lords. The paſſage is as follows: *Some, I doubt not, will be ready enough to think that the ſtate would receive little injury by the perpetual abſence of the biſhops from the houſe of lords.* 'Tis well for theſe *ſome* people, *who are ſo ready to think* of the biſhops expulſion, that they have found a man *ſo ready to ſpeak of it.* I ſuſpect, my lord, that theſe *ſome folks* are the ſame as thoſe *other folks*, that prefer the abolition of deans and chapters to their reduction. One thing however is clear, that between the two, our poor church and its eſtabliſhment are completely diſpoſed of. Farewell to all its dignitaries at once! The ſchiſmatics will not ſay nay. *The diſſenting clergy* (whom, ſays your lordſhip, *I cannot look upon as inferior to the clergy of the eſtabliſhment, either in learning or morals)* will, I dare ſay, repay you the fine compliment you have made them; and when you have effected your reform, and ſignalized yourſelf as *the great leveller of the hierarchy*, they will, I hope, admit you to the honour of an equality with that *learned and moral* ſet of ſectaries, who, for good reaſons, no doubt (elſe they could not be ſo learned) and for honeſt ones (elſe

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they could not be ſo moral) diſſent and ſeparate from the eſtabliſhed church.

My lord, I tell you as your friend, theſe are new-fangled tenets and opinions, which, in ſpite of all the echo of applauſe, will not abide the teſt of reaſon and diſcretion, and which your cooler and corrected judgement will in time repent of and condemn.

When objections are ſtated ſo frequently, and left unanſwered, in a publication, addreſſed indeed to the head of the church, but which, in effect, is an appeal to the laity, they are in fact ſuggeſtions, they have all the malice of opinions, and all the miſchief of authority. What need of bringing in the diſſenting clergy at all? What call for this unneceſſary exertion, this voluntary parade of candour? Your ſubject does not require it; no tittle of your propoſal points that way, nor does the hurry and precipitation with which you write, juſtify the digreſſion. When deans and chapters are to be aboliſhed, you have no buſineſs with them, you cannot ſtop to ſay one word in arreſt of their extinction; the ſcape-goats may periſh in their ſtalls for what you care. So great is your hurry to get through the taſk of reducing them, that if any one thinks

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it better to annihilate them, you have nothing to ſay to the contrary. How comes this hurry in one caſe, to be contraſted by ſo much leiſure in another? When the eſtabliſhed church is to be cried down, you cannot ſtop to defend it; when the diſſenting clergy are to be cried up, you can ſtop, and ſtay the breaking off of your ſubject, to hook in their panegyric, though at the expence of a digreſſion.

After having ſtated the purport of your propoſed bill, your lordſhip proceeds to explain what I ſuppoſe will be aſſerted in the preamble; viz. that the general proviſion for the parochial clergy is inadequate and inſufficient. You obſerve, that the revenue of the church of England is not well underſtood, and that *you have met a great many very ſenſible men of all profeſſions and ranks, who did not underſtand it*: that theſe ſenſible men have expreſſed great ſurprize at being told by your lordſhip that the whole income of the church, including even the two Univerſities, did not amount, upon the moſt liberal calculation, to 1,500,000*l.* a year: and that upon this eſtimate, which you have good reaſon to believe to be near the truth, there would not remain to each individual, rating the clergy

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at ten thouſand, above 150*l.* a year, ſuppoſing that we had *no biſhops to inſpect and govern the church; no deaneries, prebends, or canonries to ſtimulate the clergy to excel in literary attainments; nor any colleges or univerſities to inſtruct our youth.* This proviſion, you obſerve, is ſo mean and ſcanty, that there can ſurely be no impropriety in wiſhing it to be encreaſed.—Certainly none; the principle of the bill is laudable; my exceptions are to the proviſions of it. *Apothecaries and attornies,* you obſerve, *make as much by their profeſſions, though in very moderate practice; and unleſs the ſtate will be contented with a beggarly and illiterate clergy, too mean and contemptible to do any good, either by precept or example; unleſs it will condeſcend to have taylors and coblers for its paſtors and teachers, the whole proviſion for the church is as low as it can be.* If there was any intention in the ſtate to lower the general revenue of the church, this obſervation would be more pertinent than it appears to be at preſent; but if this is not the caſe, and if, on the contrary, the revenue of the church is a riſing revenue, then where is the occaſion for complaint or apprehenſion? Are the clergy that beggarly and illi-

terate claſs of men? Are they too mean and contemptible to do any good by precept or example? Are our paſtors and teachers literally *taylors and coblers*, or only on occaſion the well-educated ſons of *taylors*, &c.? If they are not this beggarly and illiterate race of men (and that they are not, your lordſhip and the whole kingdom will admit) where then is the proof that their revenues are inadequate and inſufficient? Our churches are not ſerved by *taylors and coblers*; the ſtate is not purpoſed to lower their revenue; on the contrary, every year brings augmentation to that revenue; whence then does your lordſhip derive that neceſſity for encreaſing their incomes, ſo urgent and immediate as to ſuggeſt to you the propoſal of taking from the deaneries, prebends, and canonries thoſe emoluments, which you yourſelf acknowledge are the very objects that *ſtimulate the clergy to excel in literary attainments?* This is a very extraordinary mode of arguing for the reduction of benefices, by proving the uſe of them. Deaneries, &c. ſtimulate our clergy to excel in learning. You propoſe to reduce thoſe deaneries, &c. fearing that the clergy, if their incomes were lowered, would

be *taylors and coblers*. By your mode of arguing I might retort, that you would make the deans, prebendaries, and canons *taylors* and *coblers*, to ſave the parochial clergy from being ſuch; and I might aſk how ſuch mechanic dignitaries would *ſtimulate* to literature: but to ſay the truth, I do not like your lordſhip's way of reaſoning well enough to make uſe of it.

A nobler uſe you could not find for any department of the clergy, than this which you point out, of giving emulation to the inferior order to excel in erudition and the ſcience of their own profeſſion. How are theſe worthy uſes brought about, and why do theſe dignities in the church *ſtimulate* to erudition? By their honour only, or jointly by their honour and emolument? Certainly by joint attraction. Leſſen thoſe emoluments, ſpread them thinly through the body of the poor parochial clergy, what is the conſequence? Plainly this, they will either ceaſe to *ſtimulate*, or *ſtimulate* in a leſs degree. The principle of emulation being cruſhed, the *literary attainments* will decline in proportion as their encouragements are diminiſhed: let it be once more repeated on this occaſion,

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that the ſame reaſoning applies to the reduction of the biſhopricks; the bench may ſtill be an object for the inferior clergy to look up to, but it will no longer *ſtimulate* the biſhops themſelves to that laudable emulation, which gives life to every order and profeſſion; and unleſs your lordſhip is of opinion, that a biſhop, by the act of conſecration, becomes at once in poſſeſſion of all human excellence and perfection *ex officio*, I ſhould ſuppoſe that the bench itſelf may, like their inferior brethren, profit by the ſpur of emulation, and owe perhaps ſome part of their preſent merit to that zeal for excelling, which the unequal diſtribution of preferment by natural conſequence inſpires. I would therefore earneſtly recommend to your lordſhip to recall your aſſertion reſpecting the good effects of deaneries, prebends, and canonries, and before you propoſe to reduce them in value, convict them of inutility; let them be proved *ſtimulatives* to idleneſs, inſtead of *ſtimulatives* to excellence, and you will find your inference follow much eaſier than it does at preſent.

But as your lordſhip is unlucky in giving teſtimony in your own cauſe, ſo you are not

more fortunate in procuring it. The words of Dr. *Bentley*, which you quote from his *Phileleutherus Lipſienſis*, make directly againſt your poſitions—*Do but once level all your preferments, and you will ſoon be as level in your learning*. This is part of the paſſage your lordſhip has ſelected in ſupport of your propoſal; which, in the opinion of your own witneſs, may as well be called a bill for levelling learning, as for levelling preferments. You have really anticipated me in this quotation, and I know not whether I am moſt obliged to your lordſhip for the honour you have done me in my anceſtor, or the advantage you have given me in my argument. You have referred yourſelf to an umpire, to whom, on every account, I willingly ſubmit my cauſe. Doctor Bentley, in this paſſage ſelected by your lordſhip, expreſſes his wonder why parents ſhould deſign their ſons for the church, under ſuch mean encouragements in point of pay, till he recollects that *a few ſhining dignities in the church, prebends, deaneries, biſhopricks, are the pious fraud that induces and decoys the parents to riſk their children's fortune in it*—and concludes (ſpeaking in the character of a *foreigner*)

reigner) that *it is this part of our eſtabliſhment that makes our clergy excel his:* then follow the words above quoted, viz. *Do but once level all your preferments, and you will ſoon be as level in your learning: for inſtead of the flower of the Engliſh youth, you will have only the refuſe ſent to your academies; and thoſe too cramped and crippled in their ſtudies, for want of aim and emulation; ſo that if your Free-thinkers had any politics, inſtead of ſuppreſſing your whole order, they ſhould make you all alike.* Few paſſages can be quoted more in point againſt your lordſhip's *levelling* propoſals; for though it is true you do not mean to *level* the orders, your bills will operate as if you had: the firſt, by reducing the biſhopricks to a very moderate *level*, and throwing out the *commendams*; the ſecond, by ſtripping the deans and chapters, and diſtributing the better part of their income amongſt the poorer clergy. Dr. Bentley obſerves, that a few ſhining dignities allure men to the ſervice of the church, as a few glittering prizes tempt adventurers to a ſtate-lottery; and to the allurements of theſe dignities he aſcribes all the advantages of the eſtabliſhed church, and the excellence of the clerical character.

Your lordſhip propoſes to melt down theſe prizes into the groſs ſum that compounds the ſmall ſhares, and conſequently muſt maintain a very contrary opinion to the authority you quote; for, unleſs it can be made appear that a ſmall augmentation to certain poor livings, by your propoſed diſtribution, will operate as a greater encouragement to the profeſſion of the church, than the temptation which its undiminiſhed revenues now holds forth to adventurers in that profeſſion, it will be impoſſible to convince mankind of the advantages and good policy of your propoſals; nay, in fact, conviction will make directly againſt your ſcheme, as tending to reduce thoſe dignities, which Dr. Bentley appoſitely obſerves, are the *glittering prizes* which allure our youth, and thoſe who have the care of them, to direct their purſuits to the profeſſion of the prieſthood. And what renders your ſcheme ſtill more objectionable, and even fatal to the intereſts and honour of the church, is, that it directly tends to deter the youth of the beſt talents, birth, and education, from the profeſſion; who certainly will not take orders with a view to ſit down upon one of your

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poor livings, though augmented to a bare proviſion with the ſpoils of the dignitaries; whilſt at the ſame time it invites the mean, the needy, and illiterate, to thruſt themſelves into a gown, from the aſſurance of a ſupport, however ſcanty. It is not therefore without good reaſon we may venture to predict the declenſion and diſgrace of the prieſthood, in the talents and characters of its profeſſors, if ever the legiſlature ſhould be ſo perverted in its judgement, as to adopt a ſcheme which you too haſtily, and without communicating with your brethren, have laid before the public. Should that ever obtain, *Væ victis! væ victori!* the purer your intentions are in the propoſal, the more poignant will be your diſappointment and remorſe, when you experience its effects.

You ſay the revenues of the church ought not to be reduced, and will not, with ſafety to the eſtabliſhment, admit of it. I agree with you in the aſſertion: the ſtate has agreed and ſtill agrees. The revenues are not in danger of a reduction, they are annually in advance; a great fund is rolling for their augmentation, and a vaſt ſum lies ready in hand, at public intereſt, waiting for purchaſes, and

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accumulating in the mean time. The bounty of Queen Anne has been in operation and receipt near ſeventy years: but this, with other great reſources, that you have either overlooked or neglected to explain, will deſerve a more particular inveſtigation.

Your lordſhip quotes the paſſage above referred to from Dr. Bentley, for the purpoſe of evincing the inadequacy of the church's preferments. It is true, he ſpeaks of the cheapneſs of the prieſthood; but he alſo ſays, that its temptations were ſufficient to engage men of talents and education in its ſervice. If it was adequate to this purpoſe, at the time of his publiſhing the *Phileleutherus Lipſienſis*, it muſt be much more ſo at preſent, and conſequently his teſtimony, as far as it goes, witneſſes againſt you. As for your lordſhip's other quotation from Archbiſhop Whitgift, in the time of Queen Elizabeth, as found in Biſhop Kennet's *caſe of impropriations*, it is much leſs in point to prove the preſent poverty of the church, than this paſſage from Dr. Bentley; but neither one nor the other have any thing to do with the caſe in queſtion.

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The computations of the number of poor livings, which you collect from Dr. Warner and Dr. Burn, ſo widely differ from each other, that they only ſerve to bring calculations of this nature into doubt. The former of theſe calculators reckons 6000 livings not above 40*l.* a year, and he ſays he ſpeaks from the beſt authority: the latter reckons only 4713 under the ſame deſcription. Here is a difference of 1287 livings; which are we to believe? When therefore Dr. Warner ſays, *that it will be* 500 *years before every living can be raiſed to* 60l. *a year by Queen Anne's bounty, ſuppoſing the ſame money to be diſtributed, as there has been for ſome years paſt*; and when Dr. Burn aſſures us, *that it will be* 339 *years before all the ſaid livings can exceed* 50l. *a year*, I think myſelf warranted in giving no credit to either of their calculations: but if any man thinks otherwiſe, and chuſes to adopt either of theſe calculations, or to make his own upon the ſame premiſes, ſtill I muſt obſerve, that ſuch calculation will not give any adequate eſtimate of the future poſſible rate of augmentation, becauſe no allowance is made for many concurrent cauſes of augmentation, which come

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in aid of that fund, upon which alone they found their calculations.

One of theſe cauſes is the benefactions of private patrons, which, in all the caſes of livings under that deſcription, keeps pace with the augmentations from Queen Anne's bounty. It ſhould ſeem that neither Dr. Warner nor Dr. Burn take theſe benefactions into their calculations, which alone muſt make them groſsly erroneous. Dr. Warner grounds his calculation expreſsly and ſolely upon Queen Anne's bounty, ſuppoſing the ſame money to be diſtributed as there has been for ſome years paſt. This at once deſtroys all the evidence of his account, as will hereafter be made appear. Dr. Burn computes the clear amount of the bounty to make 55 augmentations yearly, by which terms he expreſsly throws out of his account private benefactions: his calculation therefore is as erroneous as the former. Your lordſhip, ſenſible of the groſſneſs of theſe miſcalculations, computes *that half of ſuch augmentations may be made in conjunction with other benefactors*, though you think this proportion too large; and upon this preſumption you reduce Dr. Burn's calculation of

339 years to 226 years (of which 70 are nearly expired) before all livings will exceed the ſaid ſum of 50*l.* a year. But what a looſe mode of computing is this! Your lordſhip muſt know there are other cauſes co-operating for the encreaſe of the church revenues, and you muſt be well aware that this method of computing will not give us any thing near the true progreſs of the augmentation of livings. As it is no doubt in your power to reſort to the governors of the fund, you might have informed us with preciſion what purchaſes have been made in mortmain from the fund in queſtion, what ſums have been paid in conjunction by private patrons, and (which is another cauſe of augmentation you do not touch upon) what bequeſts and donations have within that period been given in aid to the church. Your lordſhip knows, or may know, what theſe have actually been; I can only know that they have been too conſiderable to be left out of the account. One gentleman of the county of Kent *, if I am rightly informed, lately bequeathed the ſum of twelve thouſand pounds to the church: other inſtances might be given;

* Sir Philip Butler.

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but enough has been ſaid to ſhew how ſhort and erroneous all calculations muſt be that turn ſingly upon the operation of Queen Anne's bounty, and how little we can depend upon looſe gueſſes at private benefactions.

But there is yet another cauſe of encreaſe, from which the church has already reaped great benefit, and is in train to reap much more. Can it have eſcaped your lordſhip's recollection to ſtate the great augmentation to livings, which the improvement of lands by incloſure and otherwiſe has occaſioned, particularly in the northern and inland counties, where thoſe improvements have moſtly obtained? If this has not in all caſes fallen where your lordſhip, and all good men, could wiſh it, upon the pooreſt livings only, ſtill it has fallen to the church, and may contribute as ſuch to prevent, what your lordſhip ſo piouſly wiſhes to prevent, the neceſſity of our pulpits being ſerved by *taylors and coblers*. Let the number of incloſing acts, paſſed ſince the year 1714, be reckoned up, and a calculation taken of the advance made in the incomes of the parochial clergy, in conſequence of this and other improvements in the value of lands, within

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the period of 70 years, and the augmentation to the church revenues from this cauſe alone will be found prodigious. I myſelf have met with inſtances of livings, that have been augmented by Queen Anne's bounty under one incumbent, raiſed by a ſucceeding one to comfortable incomes. New modes of cultivation, and a better ſyſtem of agriculture throughout the iſland, have improved the value of lands prodigiouſly, and (to uſe Lord Chatham's words, as quoted by your lordſhip) *the church, God bleſs it! has a pittance* out of all men's labour, and advances *pari paſſu* with the ſtate.

Many other collateral cauſes come in aid of the revenues of the church. The many new chapels erected upon private ſpeculation, in the rich and overgrown pariſhes of the capital, contribute in no inconſiderable degree: and in time of war the chaplainſhips in our fleets and armies bring a temporary acceſſion of revenue, and give employment to very many of the young and enterprizing miniſters of the Goſpel. The ſtipends now given by our nobility and gentry of fortune, to the clerical preceptors and tutors of their ſons, and the advantages derivable from the

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patronage of thoſe families, operate ſenſibly as general aids and encouragements to the profeſſion.

Upon examining the ſtatutes I find, that from 1775 to 1780 incluſive, which is a period of ſix years only, 342 acts of incloſure were paſſed; a number far exceeding my gueſs, though I was prepared to believe them very numerous. In the laſt two years they amounted only to 36; but from the year of Queen Anne's bounty to 1775, I find 841 bills brought in for incloſures, though of the bills paſſed I did not take the pains to make a correct reckoning. Let any man, who has leiſure and curioſity enough, make the calculation of profit to the church upon theſe incloſing acts, ſince the operation of Queen Anne's bounty, and I am ſure it will turn out a very conſiderable aid; eſpecially if it ſhould appear that church livings in general have been raiſed in their value proportionably to the decreaſe upon the value of money throughout the kingdom. Upon this article of incloſures your lordſhip is totally ſilent; it makes againſt the neceſſity of your plan, but I ſhould hope that was not your reaſon for ſuppreſſing it.

I have already hinted at the *accumulation fund* in the hands of the church, arising from the ſurpluſage of the revenue yet undiſpoſed of in the purchaſe of lands. As purchaſes cannot in many caſes be found, either from the indiſpoſition in the land-owners to ſell, or from difficulties attending titles (in which the church, perhaps, is nice to an exceſs) it has been the prudent œconomy of the corporation, to reduce the intereſt to two per cent. only on the money deſtined to the augmentation of certain livings, till ſuch time as the incumbent ſhall find a purchaſe ſuitable to the purpoſe of the church. Hence it has ariſen, that a great ſurpluſage has for many years been rolling; which being veſted in the public funds at full intereſt, produces a ſecondary income, co-operative with the revenue of the firſt-fruits and tenths. Be this fund what it may, the balance of intereſt upon intereſt is now become part and parcel of Queen Anne's bounty; and it is evident, therefore, that all calculations, formed upon the bare income of the firſt-fruits and tenths, muſt be ſhort and erroneous upon the face of them. Dr. Warner and Dr. Burn found their calculations upon

patronage of thoſe families, operate ſenſibly as general aids and encouragements to the profeſſion.

Upon examining the ſtatutes I find, that from 1775 to 1780 incluſive, which is a period of ſix years only, 342 acts of incloſure were paſſed; a number far exceeding my gueſs, though I was prepared to believe them very numerous. In the laſt two years they amounted only to 36; but from the year of Queen Anne's bounty to 1775, I find 841 bills brought in for incloſures, though of the bills paſſed I did not take the pains to make a correct reckoning. Let any man, who has leiſure and curioſity enough, make the calculation of profit to the church upon theſe incloſing acts, ſince the operation of Queen Anne's bounty, and I am ſure it will turn out a very conſiderable aid; eſpecially if it ſhould appear that church livings in general have been raiſed in their value proportionably to the decreaſe upon the value of money throughout the kingdom. Upon this article of incloſures your lordſhip is totally ſilent; it makes againſt the neceſſity of your plan, but I ſhould hope that was not your reaſon for ſuppreſſing it.

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the money actually diſtributed for ſome years paſt; and now it appears that the money diſtributed has, for the above reaſons, ſo far fallen ſhort of the money collected by the bounty, and the intereſt upon the funded ſtock, that a vaſt ſurpluſage has accumulated, as a fund for the future uſes of the church, which bids fair, in a ſhort courſe of time, to rival its parent ſtock. And in that caſe, it will no doubt be the wiſdom of the church, and the wiſh of the ſtate, to put this money to its proper uſes, by giving to the poor livings the full amount of the benefit intended for them originally; and as for the ſurpluſage of intereſt above two per cent. which has accumulated in the ſeveral caſes where purchaſes could not be found, it will be matter of conſideration, whether that ſhould go to the reſpective benefices upon which it has accumulated, or in aid of the general fund to the uſes of the church at large.

I love the church too well to preſs any queſtion further than it's intereſts may warrant; but, informed as I am upon this ſubject, I am bold to ſay, and pledge myſelf for what I ſay, that the church of England, is not at preſent ſo deſtitute of reſource, as to

make

make it neceſſary to reſort to your lordſhip's ſcheme of reduction for the ſupport of it's poorer miniſters; and therefore, if your lordſhip's ſcheme is not recommendable upon it's own merits, as matter of reform, it ought not to be adopted upon motives of neceſſity. In plainer words, my lord, the funds of the church applicable to the augmentation of poor livings, I do contend are ſufficient to augment thoſe livings, without reduction of it's dignities, in a much leſs compaſs of time than the calculations you refer to, and greatly ſooner than men in general are aware of. If therefore theſe dignities, which you would reduce, were conſidered ſo eſſential to the proſperity of the church by doctor Bentley, whoſe authority you quote for it's poverty; how much more reaſon is there now againſt reducing thoſe dignities, when the poverty of the church at large, cannot be urged as a plea for the reduction you propoſe?

It has been the policy of the body corporate, in whom the revenues of the firſt-fruits and tenths are veſted, to make a myſtery of their proceedings. It would be more for the honour of the church that this board

ſhould not withhold from the friends of the church, ſuch reaſonable information as ſhould be required from them: and if there is any immediate probability of theſe bills projected by your lordſhip taking place, it will behove them, in their own defence, to be more explicit. They are truſtees for the diſtribution of a bounty granted by the crown to the church, and they act under powers veſted in them by act of parliament: I am at a loſs to find any good reaſon why a corporation ſo conſtituted, and to ſuch purpoſes, ſhould refuſe to communicate ſuch intelligence touching the application of their truſt, as is for the intereſts of the church to be known.

By the act of the 5th of Queen Anne, paſſed ſubſequent to the bounty-act, the biſhops were directed to certify into the exchequer the clear yearly value of ſmall benefices with cure of ſouls, within their reſpective dioceſes, in order that ſuch benefices as did not exeeed £. 50 *per annum*, ſhould be diſcharged from payment of firſt-fruits and tenths for ever. It would be ſatisfactory to compare theſe returns with the preſent returns of ſmall benefices not exceeding £. 50;

it would be ſatisfactory to know the amount of monies veſted in the funds, accumulated from the unapplied ſurpluſage of the firſt-fruits, &c.; for theſe data would enable us to correct the errors of calculators, which miſlead the public judgement and give an air of neceſſity to propoſals for levelling and reducing dignities, which neceſſity I am ſatisfied does not exiſt, and which propoſals I am ſure are in their nature ruinous and fatal to the hierarchy.

Dr. Burn computes the clear amount of the bounty to make 55 augmentations yearly. He does not tell us what he calls the *clear amount*; but I rate it at 20,000*l.* per annum. It was about thirty years ago, upon a certain occaſion, it appeared, that the corporation of Queen Anne's bounty had 300,000*l.* in the funds; how that may have ſince encreaſed, I know not; but if we add the ſurpluſage of intereſt above two per cent. upon this capital, and take into account beſides, the contribution of one moiety from the private patrons of all ſmall livings augmented by the church, this computation of 55 augmentations yearly will be ſhort of the truth. With reſpect to the annual income of the

bounty, I believe I am correct; as to the amount of the ſurpluſage, if I am miſtaken, it is to be hoped, they at leaſt who withhold the information, will excuſe the error.

Though it is probable your lordſhip's publication will not exactly produce the ends propoſed, yet it is likely to be followed by conſequences that will bring to light theſe *arcana* of the church. An innovating ſpirit is ſo prevalent in this age, and the word *reform* is a word ſo popular, that the church will be driven to it's defence. The current of the times, my lord, is in your favour, and the weak efforts of an individual to ſtem the faſhionable propenſity, is at beſt but an unthankful office. Other ſchemes, I have reaſon to believe, are in projection; the ſignal for conflict is thrown out, and the ſtruggle muſt finally be decided by ſtronger hands.

If I am well informed, there is an egg in the neſt, and one is brooding it, who will hatch a cockatrice: the time may be at hand when your lordſhip, with the reſt of your brethren, may fly to your nurſing-father the King, the ſupreme head of the church, and ſeek protection under that foſtering influence which you now arraign:

" Is this the honour you do one another?
" 'Tis well there's one above you yet."
(Shakeſp. K. Hen. VIII.)

Depend upon it, my lord biſhop of Landaff, theſe ſpeculations of your's will breed, and, though inefficient, and for that reaſon innocent in themſelves, their progeny may be leſs inert; the graft may bear fruit, though the ſtock is but a thorn.

I cannot in juſtice paſs over one condition of your lordſhip's propoſal, which is not to operate for depriving preſent poſſeſſors of their property in theſe dignities; *a meaſure*, you obſerve, *too full of injuſtice and cruelty to be thought of, except by ſelfiſh enthuſiaſts in times of public confuſion.* I wiſh our *ſtate-reformers* had thought as liberally on this ſubject as your lordſhip thinks. Happy would it have been for ſome families, who are now diſmiſſed to poverty. Many of us poor reformed placemen may feelingly exclaim,

" Had I but ſerv'd *the church* with half the
" zeal
" I ſerv'd my king, it would not in mine
" age
" Have left me naked."

Upon

Upon the ſubject of *mortmain*, which your lordſhip has ſlightly touched, I have only to obſerve, that if the difficulties of purchaſing lands for the augmentation of ſmall benefices have already been ſuch as to occaſion an accumulation ſo great as I ſuppoſe it is, it may be for the wiſdom of the church to provide ſome means of prevention in future, ſo that the revenue of the firſt-fruits and tenths may have its full operation; and this perhaps cannot be better done than by allowing the clergy to accept of certain payments from the funds, in lieu of rents from lands held in mortmain, according to your lordſhip's idea; and this I think will call for ſpeedy conſideration, both from church and ſtate.

And now, my lord, in concluſion, I aſſure you, that my motive for addreſſing this publication to you, has ariſen ſolely from ſincerity of opinion, and a ſtrong perſuaſion of the evil conſequences of diſturbing the dignities and revenues of the church as now eſtabliſhed. A love of controverſy, or a vain conceit of trying ſtrength with your lordſhip in this or any other queſtion, never entered my mind. What may follow from it

time

time will ſhew; at all events, I hope it will not give diſpleaſure to your lordſhip: if upon reviſal I had found the paſſage that could juſtly give it, I had ſtruck it out. You perhaps alſo will reviſe your Letter; and one of two conſequences will then enſue; either you will, upon maturer thoughts, ſee reaſon to deſiſt from your propoſal, and then I know your candour will revoke what you have propoſed; or elſe what I have now objected, will draw forth from you ſuch arguments in fuller vindication of your plan, as may convince the world of the ſoundneſs of your judgement, whilſt they confute the weakneſs of my objections: in either caſe, the reſult will be for your honour, and the church's benefit.

I am, &c.

R. C.

P. S. I beg leave, by way of Poſtſcript, to throw out the following eaſy calculations.

Dr. Burn, in his Eccleſiaſtical Law, (article firſt-fruits and tenths) ſtates the number of ſmall livings as follows; viz.

Livings

Livings not exceeding 10*l.* a year - 1071.
D° above 10*l.* and not exceeding 20*l.* 1467.
D° above 20*l.* and not exceeding 30*l.* 1126.
D° above 30*l.* and not exceeding 40*l.* 1049.

He computes the clear amount of the bounty to make 55 augmentations yearly.

Taking the numbers as above, without deducting the ſmall livings augmented ſince his calculation, it appears that 55 augmentations of 400*l.* each, make 22,000*l.* yearly.

If we eſtimate the income of the bounty at 20,000*l.* this leaves only the ſum of 2,000*l.* annually for benefactions of private patrons, bounties and bequeſts, &c. It is to be preſumed, therefore, we are within the rate, when we compute as above 55 yearly augmentations of 400*l.* each.

400*l.* at 25 years purchaſe, buys a rent of 16*l.* per annum: I call it upon an average 15*l.*

1071 livings not exceeding 10*l.* a year, twice augmented by 400*l.* at 55 livings per year, will involve the income of the bounty ſomething leſs than 39 years.

1467 livings above 10*l.* and not exceeding 20*l.* augmented once with 400*l.* and once with 200*l.* will involve the income of the bounty 40 years.

1126 livings above 20*l.* and not exceeding 30*l.* augmented once with 400*l.* will involve the income of the bounty 20½ years.

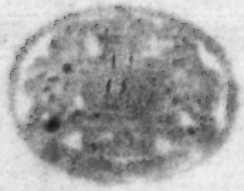
1049 livings above 30*l.* and not exceeding 40*l.* augmented once with 200*l.* will involve the income of the bounty 9½ years.

The ſum total of years is 109.

N. B. In this calculation, the number of years paſſed ſince Dr. Burn made his eſtimate, ſhould be deducted.

The benefactions at 2,000*l.* a year are rated too low, according to your lordſhip's computation.

The accumulation of intereſt money above the rate of 2*l.* per cent. is not taken into the account; which, if applied to the reſpective livings on which it has accumulated for want of purchaſes, will raiſe them above the average rate of 400*l.* each; if turned into the general ſtock, will raiſe the number of augmentations above the average rate of 55*l.* annually.

Livings raiſed by incloſure or otherwiſe, not accounted for; and Dr. Burn's computation of ſmall livings taken for granted.

F I N I S.